AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 26, 1998

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 31, 1998

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 16, 1998

SENATE BILL No. 1415

Introduced by Senator ~~Lee~~ *Burton*
(Principal coauthor: Senator Lockyer)
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Perata)
(Coauthors: Senators Alpert, Hughes, Karnette, Rainey, Solis, and Vasconcellos)
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Aroner, Figueroa, Leach, Sweeney, and Torlakson)

January 16, 1998

An act relating to the Chabot Observatory and Science Center, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1415, as amended, ~~Lee~~ *Burton*. Chabot Observatory and Science Center.

Existing law does not contain any provision relating to the Chabot Observatory and Science Center.

This bill would make various legislative findings and declarations relative to the Chabot Observatory and Science Center, a joint powers agency created by the City of Oakland, the Oakland Unified School District, and the East Bay Regional Park District. The bill would appropriate a sum not to exceed ~~$18,000,000~~ *$10,000,000* from the General Fund to the joint powers agency to fund the completion of a new Chabot Observatory and Science Center facility and its

science education programs, and would require the Legislative Analyst to review and report to the Legislature on the use of those funds upon completion of the facility.

Vote: $^{2}/_{3}$. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The historic Chabot Observatory began as a public observatory in downtown Oakland, serving Oakland citizens and the greater Bay Area community, and through its programs has welcomed and educated over two million visitors since 1883.

(b) In the early 20th century, the observatory was administered by the Oakland Unified School District which made the facility an integral part of formal science education programs and also made it available for a large public program.

(c) The current Chabot Observatory and Science Center facility, consisting of a 1915-era observatory building, a separate planetarium, and several temporary classrooms and laboratories, severely limits the science center's ability to fulfill the vision for science education due to technological and structural safety issues, including its location directly on an active rift of the Hayward Fault and the interference from surrounding city lights that have encroached in the years since the observatory's construction and affect viewing through its historic 8-inch and 20-inch public telescopes.

(d) In 1989, Oakland's interest in having a regional science center that was responsive to the science education needs of its children and neighboring communities led to the creation of a joint powers agency by the City of Oakland, the Oakland Unified School District, and the East Bay Regional Park District, and these partner agencies have together contributed over $19,000,000 to this project.

(e) The vision of the new Chabot Observatory and Science Center is to create the nation's premier model for teaching science and technologies, where one can imagine, understand, and learn to shape the future through science.

(f) The Chabot Observatory and Science Center's goals are as follows:

(1) To present more effective and engaging ways for children and adults to explore science and technology.

(2) To train teachers in science education's best practices and new teaching technologies, and equip them with resources to use these in the classroom.

(3) To inspire students and their families to pursue higher levels of scientific literacy.

(4) To demonstrate the relevance of science and technology in everyday living.

(g) California's youth must be science-literate and comfortable with technology to be competitive job seekers, and it is widely recognized that the quality of science, mathematics, and environmental education needs to be improved in California and nationwide, and that there are endemic cycles of low achievement that persist in many high minority-enrolled public schools and low-income neighborhoods.

(h) These deficiencies are particularly pressing in the diverse San Francisco Bay area, where the growth in science and technology-related industries has created an enormous demand for educated, skilled workers.

(i) Many respected researchers have demonstrated the need for a fundamental shift in methods of science teaching to emphasize curriculum that is project-based, anchored in a ''real world context,'' discovery oriented, and interdisciplinary, and the education of teachers must be approached in a different way to reflect new approaches to curriculum, activities, and student needs.

(j) The Chabot Observatory and Science Center programs complement and supplement the school district's efforts to implement a more effective educational model by offering a wide range of programs

and resources that schools and districts cannot provide on their own.

(k) The Chabot Observatory and Science Center places a major emphasis on engaging populations that are historically not well represented in science and technology education, including women, minorities, and low-income youth.

(*l*) The Chabot Observatory and Science Center has planned to build a new 77,000 square foot science education center in the Joaquin Miller Park of Oakland, to fulfill these goals and offer new programs for the people of the bay area.

(m) The Chabot Observatory and Science Center has raised over $45,000,000 to build a new science education center, including a $17,500,000 grant from the United States Air Force Office of Scientific Research.

(n) The citizens of Oakland in 1996 voted approval for $6,500,000 for this new facility through the general obligation bond act known as Measure I.

(o) The Chabot Observatory and Science Center has raised over $1,500,000 in peer-reviewed scientific grants, $785,000 from private foundations, $800,000 from corporations, and over $1,500,000 from individuals to support planning and design of this new science education center.

(p) This new facility is scheduled to open in 1999, and will include the magnificent historic Chabot telescopes; a new 36-inch computerized telescope; a state-of-the-art planetarium; interactive science exhibits for children, adults, and families; a Challenger Center space station and mission control simulator; a telescope makers' workshop; a fiber optic-linked multimedia center; a virtual science center for continuous online access and education in homes, communities, libraries, and schools; infrared technology for multilingual programs; and flexible, integrated laboratory spaces for science exploration and education.

(q) This new science center will become a centerpiece for public astronomy and science education in the country, and will contribute toward the improvement of

science education and technological literacy for California students, teachers, and families.

(r) Eighteen million dollars ($18,000,000) of support from the state will make possible the timely completion of the new Chabot Observatory and Science Center by October 1999, with all facilities available to the public and all education programs in place to serve the children, teachers, and families of the state.

SEC. 2. (a) A sum not to exceed ~~eighteen million dollars ($18,000,000)~~ *ten million dollars ($10,000,000)* is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Chabot Observatory and Science Center, a joint powers agency created by the City of Oakland, the Oakland Unified School District, and the East Bay Regional Park District, to fund the completion of the new Chabot Observatory and Science Center facility in Oakland and its programs for science education for the people of the state.

(b) The Legislative Analyst shall review the use of the funds appropriated pursuant to subdivision (a) and shall submit to the Legislature a report on its findings upon the completion of the new Chabot Observatory and Science Center facility.

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